

CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February Session, 2012

Raised Bill No. 156

**An Act Concerning Sibling Visitation for Children in the Care and Custody of the
Commissioner of Children and Families**

Referred to Select Committee on Children

REMARKS OF ATTY. MICHAEL H. AGRANOFF

Law Offices of M.H. Agranoff

99 Stafford Road

Ellington, CT 06029

Tel: 860-872-1024

Fax: 860-871-1015

EM: AttyMikeA@agranofflaw.com

Web Site: www.agranofflaw.com

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I have been a DCF defense lawyer since 1991. At present, ours is the only law firm in the State of Connecticut providing full-service DCF defense to private-paying adults on a full-time basis.

The present bill seeks to ensure that meaningful visitation occurs for siblings who have been removed from their families. Our office applauds this bill, and notes that the visitation specified often already occurs in practice.

The bill does not specifically state that the Commissioner's decision denying such visitation could be the subject of an administrative appeal. However, by requiring denial information in treatment plan, the mechanism would exist for visitation appeal motions to be filed in the Juvenile Court.

The bond between siblings is often a casualty of the child removal process. DCF is to be commended for proposing this bill.

Respectfully Submitted,

MICHAEL H. AGRANOFF

Attorney At Law

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